Graphic Design & Illustration Using Adobe Illustrator CC 2019

Adobe conducted research to identify the foundational skills students need to effectively communicate using digital media tools. Based on feedback from educators, design professionals, businesses, and educational institutions around the world, the objectives cover entry-level skill expectations for graphic design and illustration. An individual earning this certification has approximately 150 hours of instruction and hands-on experience with the product, and is familiar with product features and capabilities, as well as relevant career concepts.

Individuals who have earned an Adobe Certified Associate certification have demonstrated mastery of the following skills. Detailed exam objectives are available on the Adobe Education Exchange.

1. Working in the Design Industry

This objective covers critical concepts related to working with colleagues and clients as well as crucial legal, technical, and design-related knowledge.

1.1 Identify the purpose, audience, and audience needs for preparing images.

1.1.a Determine whether content is relevant to the purpose, audience, and audience needs.

    i. *Key Terms: client goals, target audience, demographics, accessibility, etc.*

1.2 Communicate with colleagues and clients about design plans.

1.2.a Demonstrate knowledge of techniques for communicating about design plans with peers and clients.

    i. *Key Terms: sketches, specifications, wireframes, prototypes, iterations, change orders, drafts, feedback loop, project scope, scope creep, etc.*

1.2.b Demonstrate knowledge of basic project management concepts.

1.3 Determine the type of copyright, permissions, and licensing required to use specific content.

1.3.a Identify legal and ethical considerations for using third-party content, such as copyright, permissions, and licensing.

    i. *Key Concepts: Creative Commons, public domain, intellectual property, derivative work, commercial use, attribution, work for hire, fair use, fair dealing, etc.*

1.3.b Identify when and how to obtain permission to use images of people and locations.

    i. *Key Terms: model release, location release, etc.*

    ii. *Key Concepts: permission to use a photo is separate from permission to use a person's face or restricted location, etc.*

1.4 Demonstrate an understanding of key terminology related to digital images.

1.4.a Demonstrate knowledge of digital image terminology.

    i. *Key Terms: image resolution, image size, file types, pixel, raster, bitmap, vector, path, object, type, rasterizing, rendering, resampling, resizing, and image size measured in pixels vs document size measured in inches/centimeters, etc.*

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1.4.b   Demonstrate knowledge of how color is created in digital images.

   i.   Key Terms: color mode, bit depth, gamut, CMYK vs. RGB vs. grayscale, dithering, etc.

1.5   **Demonstrate knowledge of basic design principles and best practices employed in the design industry.**

1.5.a   Communicate visually using the elements and principles of design and common design techniques.

   i.   Key Terms: space, line, shape, form, color, texture, emphasis/focal point, unity/harmony, variety, balance, alignment, proximity, repetition, rhythm, scale, movement, negative space, gestalt, etc.

1.5.b   Identify and use common typographic adjustments to create contrast and hierarchy, and enhanced readability.

   i.   Key Terms: font, size, style, color, alignment, kerning, tracking, leading, horizontal and vertical scale, line length, etc.

1.5.c   Define common photographic and cinematic composition terms and principles.

   i.   Key Terms: aspect ratio, rule of thirds, foreground, background, color, tone, contrast, cropping, depth of field, field of view, white balance, etc.

2.   Project Setup and Interface

This objective covers the interface setup and program settings that assist in an efficient and effective workflow, as well as knowledge about ingesting digital assets for a project.

2.1   **Create a document with the appropriate settings for web, print, and video.**

2.1.a   Set appropriate document settings for printed and onscreen images.

   i.   Key Concepts: width/height, orientation, artboards, bleed, raster effects resolution, color mode, etc.

2.1.b   Create document presets to reuse for specific project needs.

2.2   **Navigate, organize, and customize the application workspace.**

2.2.a   Identify and manipulate elements of the Illustrator interface.

   i.   Key Concepts: Options bar, menus, panels, toolbar, artboards, etc.

2.2.b   Organize and customize the workspace.

   i.   Key Concepts: using and switching between default workspaces; tabbed documents; showing, hiding, nesting, and docking panels; shortcuts and menus; customizing, saving, and resetting workspaces; etc.

2.2.c   Configure application preferences.

   i.   Key Concepts: General, Type, Units, Guides & Grid, User Interface.

2.3   **Use non-printing design tools in the interface to aid in design or workflow.**

2.3.a   Navigate documents.

   i.   Key Concepts: panning, zooming, rotating artboards, pasteboard, etc.

2.3.b   Use rulers.

   i.   Key Concepts: panning, zooming, rotating artboards, pasteboard, etc.

2.3.c   Use guides and grids.

   i.   Key Concepts: adding, removing, and locking/unlocking guides; setting color; hiding guides and grids, showing grids, using snap or align options; creating guide layouts, etc.

2.3.d   Use views and modes to work efficiently with vector graphics.

   i.   Key Concepts: Outline vs Preview, Isolation mode, Drawing modes, etc.

2.4   **Import assets into a project.**

2.4.a   Open or import images.

2.4.b   Place assets in an Illustrator document.

   i.   Key Concepts: embedding, linking, copying and pasting, etc.

2.5   Manage colors, swatches, and gradients.

2.5.a   Set the active fill and stroke colors.

i. Key Concepts: Color Picker, swatches, Eyedropper tool, hexadecimal value, etc.

2.5.b   Create and customize gradients.

i. Key Concepts: Gradient panel, editing color and transparency stops, radial and elliptical gradients, Gradient Mesh, etc.

2.5.c   Create, manage, and edit swatches and swatch libraries.

i. Key Concepts: color, global color, pattern, and gradient swatches; identifying color swatch type, including Process, Spot, and Global Spot; creating, managing, and loading swatch libraries (including commercial libraries like Pantone), etc.

2.5.d   Use the Color Guide panel to select coordinated colors.

2.6   2.6   Manage brushes, symbols, styles, and patterns.

2.6.a   Open and browse libraries of included brushes, symbols, graphic styles, and patterns.

2.6.b   Create and edit brushes, symbols, styles, and patterns.

i. Key Concepts: stroke, fill, brushes, brush types, width tool, etc.

3.   Organizing Documents

This objective covers document structure such as layers, tracks, and managing document structure for efficient workflows.

3.1   Use layers to manage design elements.

3.1.a   Use the Layers panel to modify layers.

i. Key Concepts: adding, deleting, hiding/showing, locking/unlocking, duplicating, and renaming layers, etc.

3.1.b   Manage layers in a complex project.

i. Key Concepts: renaming layers, creating groups, deleting empty layers, keeping the Layers panel organized, using sublayers, etc.

3.1.c   Work with multiple layers.

i. Key Concepts: hierarchy and stacking order, selecting, selecting and targeting objects using the Layers panel, etc.

3.2   Modify layer visibility using opacity and masks.

3.2.a   Adjust a layer's opacity.

3.2.b   Create, apply, and manipulate clipping masks.

4.   Creating and Modifying Visual Elements

This objective covers core tools and functionality of the application, as well as tools that affect the visual appearance of document elements.

4.1   Use core tools and features to create visual elements.

4.1.a   Create images using a variety of tools.

i. Key Tools: drawing tools, painting tools, Pencil tool, Paintbrush tool, vector shapes, Blob Brush tool, etc.

4.1.b   Modify and edit vector images using a variety of vector tools.

i. Key Tools: selection tools, slicing tools, cutting tools, etc.

4.2   Add and manipulate text using appropriate typographic settings.

4.2.a   Use type tools to add typography to a design.

i. Key Tools: Point Type tool, Area Type tool, Type on a Path tool, Vertical Type tool, Vertical Area Type tool, Vertical Type on a Path tool, and Touch Type tool, etc.

ii. Key Concepts: difference between area type, point type, and type on a path must be understood.

4.2.b Use appropriate character settings in a design.

    i. Key Settings: font, size, style, alignment, kerning, tracking, leading, horizontal and vertical scale, and color used to enhance readability and hierarchy, etc.

4.2.c Use appropriate paragraph settings in a design.

    i. Key Settings: indentation, alignment, paragraph spacing, etc.

4.2.d Convert text to graphics.

    i. Key Concepts: converting text to outlines, benefits/disadvantages, etc.

4.2.e Manage text flow across multiple text areas.

    i. Key Concepts: managing overflow text, threading text, wrapping text, etc.

4.3 Make, manage, and manipulate selections.

4.3.a Select objects using a variety of tools.

    i. Key Concepts: targeting vs selecting, saving selections, selecting based on object attributes (color, stroke, opacity), etc.

4.3.b Modify and refine selections using various methods.

    i. Key Concepts: keyboard modifiers, selecting multiple objects with selection tools or Layers panel, moving and grouping objects, regular Selection tool vs Direct Selection tool vs Group Selection tool, etc.

4.3.c Group or ungroup selections.

    i. Key Concepts: grouped objects, Isolation Mode, Group Selection tool, etc.

4.4 Transform digital graphics and media.

4.4.a Modify artboards.

    i. Key Tools: Artboard tool; resizing, cropping, and copying art and artboards, etc.

    ii. Key Concept: understanding the relationship between the art and the artboard.

4.4.b Rotate, flip, and transform individual layers, objects, selections, groups, or graphical elements.

    i. Key Concepts: scaling, scale options, transforming, warping, distorting, skewing, using distortion tools or menu options, etc.

4.5 Use basic reconstructing and editing techniques to manipulate digital graphics and media.

4.5.a Apply basic auto-correction methods and tools.

    i. Key Tools: Simplify tool, Shaper tool, Smooth tool, Join tool, etc.

4.5.b Repair and reconstruct images.

    i. Key Tools: eraser, scissors, knife, Shape Builder, pathfinder, Live Paint, etc.

4.5.c Evaluate or adjust the appearance of objects, selections, or layers.

    i. Key Concepts: fill and stroke, Appearance panel, opacity, brushes, Eyedropper tool, etc.

4.5.d Use Image Trace to create vectors from bitmap graphics.

    i. Key Concepts: Trace presets, tracing settings, expanding, etc.

4.6 Modify the appearance of design elements using effects and graphic styles.

4.6.a Use effects to modify images.

    i. Key Concepts: identifying the difference between raster and vector effects, drop shadows, feathers, and glows; editing applied effects, etc.

4.6.b Create, edit, and save Graphic Styles.

    i. Key Concepts: creating, deleting, and managing graphic styles, breaking links to graphic styles, etc.

4.6.c Expand the appearance of objects.

    i. Key Concepts: expanding transformations, stroke, effects, etc.

5. Publishing Digital Media

This objective covers saving and exporting documents or assets within individual layers or selections.

5.1 Prepare images for export to web, print, and video.

5.1.a Check documents for errors and project specifications.

   i. *Key Concepts: setting document color mode (color space), resolution (raster effects), pixel dimensions, metadata, etc.*

5.2 Export or save digital images to various file formats.

5.2.a Save in the native file format for Illustrator (.ai).

   i. *Key Concepts: compatibility, save as a copy, file package, etc.*

5.2.b Save images in appropriate formats for print or screen.

   i. *Key Concepts: file formats (including vector vs. raster), bit depth, color space, resolution, pixel dimensions, etc.*

5.2.c Export project elements.

   i. *Key Concepts: exporting assets, exporting specific selections or artboards, exporting for screens, etc.*

5.2.d Package an Illustrator project.

   i. *Key Concepts: font and image management, file packages, etc.*

NOTE: All key items (Key Terms, Key Tools, Key Concepts, and Key Settings) are examples and not a comprehensive list. Changes in the industry or application may necessitate coverage of items not listed that apply to the Target Candidate description for the Adobe Certified Associate program.